

HOUSE BILL 3094
By Pruitt

AN ACT to establish the office of women's health in the department of health.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE:

SECTION 1. As used in this act,

- (1) "Commissioner" means the commissioner of health.
- (2) "Department" means the department of health.
- (3) "Office" refers to the office of women's health established by this act.

SECTION 2. The office of women's health is established within the department of health.

SECTION 3. The office is established for the following purposes:

- (1) To educate and advocate for women's health by requesting that the department, either on its own or in partnership with other entities, establish appropriate forums, programs, or initiatives designed to educate the public regarding women's health, with an emphasis on preventive health and healthy lifestyles.
- (2) To assist the commissioner in identifying, coordinating, and establishing priorities for programs, services, and resources the state should provide for women's

health issues and concerns relating to the reproductive, menopausal, and postmenopausal phases of a woman's life, with an emphasis on postmenopausal health.

(3) To serve as a clearinghouse and resource for information on women's health by maintaining a current list of applicable resources and referring persons to the proper locations for obtaining such information. The information shall include the following:

(A) Diseases that significantly impact women, including heart disease, cancer, and osteoporosis.

(B) Menopause.

(C) Mental health.

(D) Substance abuse.

(E) Sexually transmitted diseases.

(F) Sexual assault and domestic violence.

(4) To collect, classify, and analyze relevant research information and data conducted or compiled by:

(A) The department; or

(B) Other entities in collaboration with the department;

and to provide interested persons with information regarding the research results, except as prohibited by law.

(5) To develop and recommend funding and program activities for educating the public on women's health initiatives, including the following:

(A) Health needs throughout a woman's life.

(B) Diseases that significantly affect women, including heart disease, cancer, and osteoporosis.

(C) Access to health care for women.

(D) Poverty and women's health.

(E) The leading causes of morbidity and mortality for women.

(F) Special health concerns of minority women.

(6) To make recommendations to the commissioner regarding programs that address women's health issues for inclusion in the department's annual budget and strategic planning.

(7) To seek funding from private or governmental entities to carry out the purposes of this act.

(8) To conduct public educational forums in conjunction with other public health events and conferences in Tennessee to raise public awareness and educate citizens about women's health issues, including the Tennessee economic council on women.

(9) To coordinate the activities and programs of the office with other entities that focus on women's health or women's issues, including the Tennessee economic council on women.

SECTION 4. (a) The commissioner may appoint persons from within existing resources for this office, including:

(1) The director of the office, and

(2) Any other employees that the commissioner determines are necessary.

(b) The employees appointed under subdivision (a)(2) shall report to the director.

(c) The director shall supervise the employees assigned to the office.

(d) The director shall oversee the administrative functions of the office.

SECTION 5. (a) The commissioner shall appoint an advisory committee on women's health to assist in advising the director regarding the duties required under this act.

(b) The advisory committee shall be comprised of persons with an expertise in and a knowledge of women's health issues in Tennessee.

(c) The commissioner shall:

(1) Determine the number of persons to serve on the advisory committee;

(2) Appoint a chairperson or co-chairpersons for the advisory committee; and

(3) Establish the policies and procedures under which the advisory committee operates.

SECTION 6. This act shall take effect July 1, 2000, the public welfare requiring it.